

History 424: Topics in American Cultural and Social History

Seminar Focus: *The History of Medicine, Public Health, and Suffering in Comparative Perspective*

History 424, Section 1
Spring Semester 2008
Wednesday, 6:00-9:50 p.m.
Schroeder Hall 102
Office Hours: Tues./Thurs. 1:00-2:00 p.m.;
Wednesday, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

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Course Description

The experiences of suffering, care, and treatment are universal—yet they vary widely, depending on time period, cultural norms, social class, gender, race/ethnicity, financial and other resources, and policy environments. Through assigned readings, discussion, and research activities, this course introduces graduate students to the histories of Western medicine, public health, and what scholars have dubbed the “patient’s view”. It also facilitates comparison of U.S. and British health care environments and systems.

Course Reading

Roy Porter, Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine (N.Y. and London: W.W. Norton, 2004)

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on her Diary, 1785-1812 (N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1991)

Paul Starr, The Social Transformation of American Medicine (Basic Books, 1982)

Dorothy Porter, Health, Civilization and the State: A History of Public Health from Ancient to Modern Times (London and N.Y.: Routledge, 1999)

Anne Hardy, Health and Medicine in Britain since 1860 (Houndmills, Hampshire, U.K.: Palgrave, 2001) (Please purchase from Amazon.com, which has multiple used copies available, or from another on-line source.)

Lucinda McCray Beier, *For Their Own Good: The Transformation of English Working-Class Health Culture* (Forthcoming from The Ohio State University Press, October 2008) (Available from the SHAC Instructors folder.)

Irina Paperno, “What can be done with diaries?” The Russian Review, 63: 4 (2004), 561-73 (Available through link in the SHAC Instructors folder.)

Course packet of readings to be purchased from PIP Printing, Bone Student Center.

Course requirements, policies, and evaluation

This reading seminar requires students to be prepared for each class meeting, lead discussion according to a negotiated schedule, participate actively in discussions, and submit writing assignments by due dates.

Assignments

- Lead discussion four times.
- Four essays, each of which responds to one or more questions posed by the professor and requires bibliographical research:
 - Essay 1 (10 pages): Beginning with seventeenth-century diary or autobiography entries, students will write about either childbirth or plague in early modern England. Students will present and be prepared to discuss their work on this essay in class on 2/20/08.
 - Essay 2 (10 pages): *The Midwife's Tale in context: American medicine at the turn of the 18th century*
 - Essay 3 (10 pages): *Critiquing modern medicine: Critiquing Starr*
 - Essay 4 (10 pages): *Medicine, public health and power*

Evaluation

Leading discussion (25 points x 4)	100
4 essays (100 points x 4)	<u>400</u>
	500

A = 450-500

B = 400-449

C = 350-399

D = 300-349

F = Below 299

Policies

- Please inform the professor ahead of time if you must miss class, be late to class, or leave class early. This class is very small. Therefore, successful class discussion requires universal attendance.
- Students must come prepared for discussion and bring copies of assigned readings to class *even when there is no written assignment covering the reading*. Although no specific evaluation points are assigned to class participation, this class depends on it. Student performance in this area may be used to determine final grades, particularly if point totals are marginal.
- Essays on the readings must be submitted by due dates, or points will be deducted.
- All citations must follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* guidelines briefly outlined in various editions of Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's).
- Cell phones must be turned off during class.

Class Schedule

January 16	Introduction to class
January 23	Overview of the history of Western medicine (Reading: Porter, <u>Blood and Guts</u>)
January 30	The medical marketplace of early modern England (Readings: Keith Thomas, Chapters 7 & 8, <u>Religion and the Decline of Magic</u> , PIP packet; Lucinda McCray Beier, Chapter 2, <u>Sufferers and Healers</u> , PIP packet)
February 6	Healers and healing in early modern England (Reading: Michael Macdonald, Chapters 1 & 2, <u>Mystical Bedlam</u> , PIP packet; Lucinda McCray Beier, "Seventeenth-century English surgery: The casebook of Joseph Binns" in C. Lawrence, <u>Medical Theory, Surgical Practice</u> , PIP packet)

- February 13 **No class. Work on Essay 1.**
- February 20 The sufferer's experience in early modern England
 (Reading: Paperno, "What can be done with diaries?")
 (Student presentation and discussion of essays on early modern English experience of childbearing or plague.)
Essay 1 due
- February 27 Health care in colonial New England
 (Reading: Ulrich, The Midwife's Tale)
- March 5 Health care in colonial New England
 (Film: "The Midwife's Tale")
- March 12 **No class. Spring break.**
- March 19 Constructing modern medicine and professional power in the United States
 (Reading: Starr, Social Transformation, Book 1)
Essay 2 due
- March 26 Rise and decline of professional sovereignty and institutional might
 (Reading: Starr, Social Transformation, Book 2 and articles from *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 29: 4-5, August-October 2004)
- April 2 And now for something completely different: Development of the British medical system
 (Reading: Hardy, Health and Medicine in Britain since 1860)
Essay 3 due
- April 9 The history of public health
 (Reading: D. Porter, Health, Civilization, and the State)
- April 16 The history of public health
 (Reading: D. Porter, Health, Civilization, and the State)
- April 23 The experience of illness and health care
 (Reading: Beier, *For their own good*)
- April 30 The experience of illness and health care
 (Reading: Beier, *For their own good*)
Last day of class. Essay 4 due..